

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 4, 5, 7-10 and 17-23 are pending in the application. Claims 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19 and 21 have been amended. Claims 1-3, 13-16 and 24-26 have been canceled.

In Section 5 of the Detailed Action portion of the Office Action, claims 4-5, 8-9, 11-13 and 17-23 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. With the above amendments, claims 4, 8, 17, 19 and 21 have been rewritten in independent form. Therefore the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 4, 8, 17, 19 and 21 are in allowable form.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from rewritten claim 4, claim 7 has been amended to depend from rewritten claim 4, claim 9 depends from rewritten claim 8, claim 18 depends from rewritten claim 17, claim 20 depends from rewritten claim 19, and claims 22 and 23 depend from rewritten claim 21. Claim 12 has been amended to depend from amended claim 8. Therefore the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 18, 20, 22 and 23 are in allowable form.

Claim 10 has been rewritten to include the elements of claims 11-13, which were objected to as being dependent from a rejected claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 11 depends from claim 10. Therefore the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 10 and 11 are in allowable form.

In Section 2 of the Detailed Action portion of the Office Action, claims 1, 14-16, and 24-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and in Section 4 of the Detailed Action portion of the Office Action, claims 2-3, 6-7 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). However, in view of the cancellation of claims 1-2, 14-16, and 24-26, the rejections of claims 2-3, 14-16, and 24-26 are moot.

Accordingly, all pending claims are believed to be allowable and an early Notice of Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Application No. 09/916,105
Amendment dated February 9, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 1, 2004

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in connection with this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (412) 263-4399 to discuss such matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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